

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 814

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Dr. Hal Reed Ramer,
President Emeritus of Volunteer State
Community College.

WHEREAS, it was with great sorrow and a profound sense of loss that the members of this General Assembly and the citizens of our State learned of the passing of Dr. Hal Reed Ramer of Nashville, a gentleman of the highest honor and integrity; and

WHEREAS, a visionary leader in higher education who was devoted to his institution, Dr. Hal R. Ramer served with acumen and industry as president of Volunteer State Community College from 1970 until his retirement in 2003, when he was most appropriately named president emeritus; and

WHEREAS, born in Kenton, Tennessee, Hal Reed Ramer relocated to Nashville at the onset of the Great Depression with his parents, Claude O. and Dixie Ramer, and his brothers, Jack and Earl; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of West End High School, Hal Ramer served in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II, seeing duty overseas in the Pacific Theater before returning home to Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, after the war, Hal Ramer attended Peabody College, earning his bachelor's degree in 1947, and he later obtained a master's degree in social work from the University of Tennessee in 1952; and

WHEREAS, joining his brother, Jack C. Ramer, at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio, in 1953, Hal Ramer would spend the next decade there serving as Staff Assistant to the President, Assistant Dean of Men, and Director of the George Wells Knight International Center while he completed his doctoral studies in higher education administration; and

WHEREAS, returning to Nashville in 1963, Dr. Hal Ramer accepted the position of Assistant State Commissioner for Higher Education of the Tennessee Department of Education,

serving in that capacity until 1970. During his tenure as Assistant State Commissioner he also served as Head of the Administrative Staff of the Division of Higher Education of the State Board of Education, which later served as the governing board for the six Tennessee regional universities, the community college system, and the state technical institutes; and

WHEREAS, an education innovator, Dr. Hal R. Ramer played an integral role in the establishment of Tennessee's community college network, working closely with the governor, the General Assembly, and the state Board of Education. In recognition of his efforts, Dr. Ramer received the Tennessee Department of Education's Distinguished Service Award in 1970; and

WHEREAS, named the founding president of Volunteer State Community College on July 1, 1970, Dr. Hal Reed Ramer would spend the next thirty-three years giving his full measure of devotion to the growth and expansion of that esteemed institution, increasing the student enrollment from 581 students in 1971 to more than 7,000 students when he retired as president in 2003; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ramer's legacy at Volunteer State is also evidenced by the physical expansion of facilities on the campus, which grew from four buildings to ten during his tenure, with the school's administration building named in his honor following his retirement; and

WHEREAS, sharing his keen insight and vast experience, Dr. Ramer served as president of the Tennessee College Association in 1986 and was a trustee of the Volunteer State College Foundation as well as a member of the President's Council of Aquinas College; he was a longtime member of the Peabody College Board of Trustees, a former national president of the Peabody Alumni Association and recipient of the 1996 Peabody Distinguished Alumnus Award; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Dr. Hal Ramer received numerous honors during his lifetime, including the Presidential Service Award from the American Association of Community Colleges, two Tennessee Governor's State Service Awards, and the 1999 Otis Floyd Jr. Award for Excellence in Administration; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, he was honored as the first recipient of the Lifetime Service Award from Peabody College of Vanderbilt University, and in 2005, he was named the first recipient of the Masonic Lodge of Gallatin's Community Service Award; and

WHEREAS, active in numerous civic, charitable, and cultural organizations, Dr. Hal Reed Ramer served on the Board of Directors of the Metro Nashville YMCA and the Board of Directors of the University Club; he was a member of the Board of Trustees for the United Way of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, the Board of Directors for the Hendersonville Chamber of Commerce, and the Board of Directors for the Nashville-Davidson County Chapter of the American Red Cross; and

WHEREAS, a prominent and longtime member of the Rotary Club, Dr. Ramer was a district scholarship chairman, a Paul Harris Fellow of Rotary International, and named Rotarian of the Year for the City of Gallatin in 1978-79; and

WHEREAS, a member of the Executive Board of the Middle Tennessee Council of the Boy Scouts of America, Hal R. Ramer was also an esteemed member of the Tennessee Historical Society, the Tennessee Academy of Science, the Knights of Pythias, and the Sumner County Historical Society; and

WHEREAS, in addition, Dr. Ramer his time and talents as a member of the Executive Board and Foundation Board of Sumner Regional Health Systems, Inc., which honored him in 2006 as its Stellar Tribute Award recipient; and

WHEREAS, a deeply spiritual gentleman, Dr. Hal Ramer was a member of the Administration Board of Belmont United Methodist Church in Nashville, which he served faithfully for many years in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Hal R. Ramer was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always remained true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by his sister-in-law, Barbara Ramer and her grandson, Phoenix Marino-Ramer; his nephew, Samuel C. Ramer and his wife Natasha Ramer; his nephew, Claude O. Ramer II and his wife Elaine Ramer; and his grand-nephew, Eric Ramer and his wife Alyse Ramer and their children, Madelaine and Lucas Ramer; and

WHEREAS, Hal Reed Ramer leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the remarkable life of this exceptional educator, public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Dr. Hal Reed Ramer, reflecting fondly upon his bountiful life of academic excellence, his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Dr. Ramer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.